19: Marshall M-S (ca. 1910) 1922 AP1 Burma
Karen AP7

of the noun to which it refers. Its use is similar to our saying in English "cattle, five head," or "bread, four loaves."

The verb is almost always considered transitive and, if there should be no word that could properly stand as its object, the nominal pronoun "ta" is added to supply it. The verb "to be" takes the objective case. The double negative is used with the verb after the manner of the French and Burmese idiom, "t'—ba" corresponding to the Burmese "m—bu."

The Karen numerals are based on the decimal system not only from one to ten, but also upwards by tens and hundreds to tens of millions. There is, however, a marked peculiarity in the Bwe method of counting from six to nine, six being three couples; seven, three couples-one; eight, four couples, and nine, four couples-one.

The Pwo dialect does not differ materially from the Sgaw in structure, or greatly in vocabulary, as shown by a comparison of the two by Dr. Wade, which indicates that thirteen-fourteenths of the words of the Sgaw and Pwo are from the same roots. For one familiar only with the Sgaw dialect there is difficulty in immediately understanding the Pwo, because the nasals affect the pronunciation of the latter. The Bwe and other Toungoo dialects seem to have nasals and wide variations in tones. They also possess letters that are lacking in the Sgaw, such as g, j, z, and a peculiar dj that is impossible to represent in English letters. The Mopgha have the letter f, which they pronounce highly aspirated.[1] The Sgaw have no g, j, v, or z. They have both the aspirated and unaspirated k, t, and p. Besides these consonants, they have gutterals and combined consonants to which there are no parallels in Western speech.[2]

Although in the early days the Karen had no written language, it is not to be inferred that they were without a literature. On the contrary, a large quantity of bard literature was handed down orally from generation to generation, being taught by certain elders to the youths who were arriving at maturity, in order that they might transmit it in turn without change to those coming after them. This literature comprises probably more than two hun-

[1] Dr. Mason in the *Journal, Asiatic Society of Bengal*, 1853, Vol. I, Pt. II, pp. 129, ff.

[2] The *Grammar* of the Karen language by Dr. Wade, now reprinted at the American Baptist Missionary Press, Rangoon, Burma, and that by Dr. Gilmore, from which the writer has largely derived his materials for this chapter, are available for those who wish to make a study of the language. *The Karen Thesaurus*, an encyclopedic dictionary of the Karen language, people, and customs, is a valuable work. Volume I of the new edition, which appeared in 1915, is especially useful, as it contains definitions in English such as are not to be found in the later volumes.